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WALL AND CEILING DESIGN.

THE ceiling and side-wall design shown upon this page presents a combination of ideas and details that are certainly unique, and in some application may be useful.

The designer intends the center ground to be a delicate canary, with gilt stars, and divided by a gilt bar from a border composed of dome-shaped ornaments in blue and gilt medallions. A second border of a deeper blue band against a French-gray ground and covered with a network of gilt, is followed by an outer border of drab edged with maroon, and with the vine in appropriate shades of green.

The design is by Mr. Charles Booze, a young student with Mr. Joseph Chapman of Philadelphia.

WHERE IS THE STYLE OF THE XIX. CENTURY?

BY THEODORE CHILD.

THE most eminent of Parisian decorative artists, Mr. Henri Fourdinois, makes some interesting reflections in a recent number of *La Revue des Arts Decoratifs* on the state of the furniture industry in

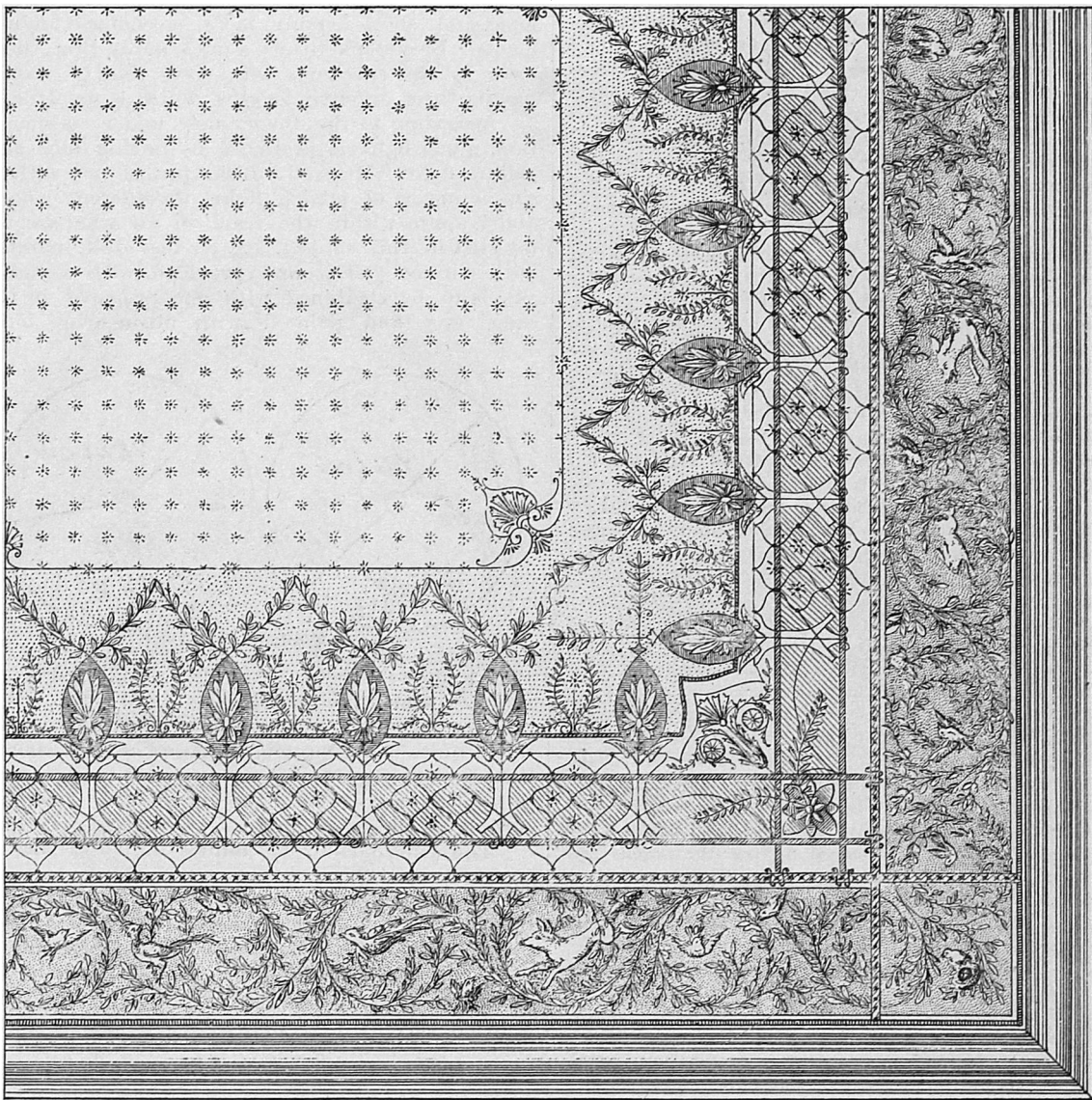
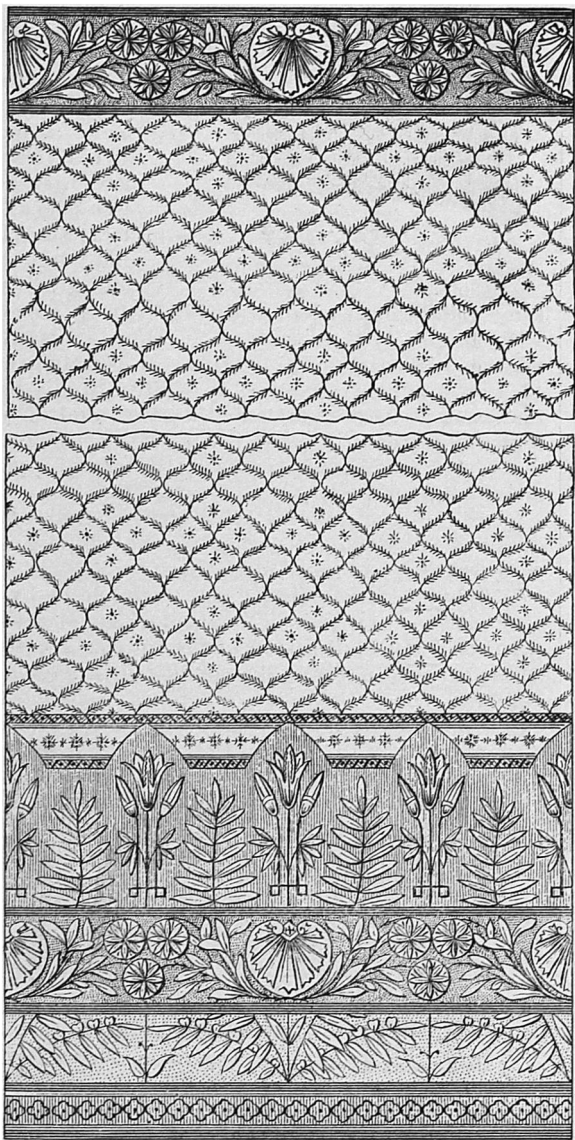
turens have to struggle is the craze of the amateurs and those whom they influence for everything that is old. The producers are placed by the consumers between the horns of this dilemma: "Copy, make in Renaissance, Louis XIV. or Louis XVI. furniture, or else manufacture common modern furniture." Either of these products is the antithesis of progress. Nevertheless, if a cabinet-maker, taking seriously the grand phases of the critics and official speech-makers, endeavors to prove that he can execute a work of his own composition, bearing the stamp of his own epoch, just as his predecessors in the days of Louis XIV. or Louis XVI., he is certain to repent of his temerity. Nobody will buy his work; its merit will be recognized, it will be admired, studied, analysed at exhibitions. But that is all. It will remain in the shop in spite of the praise of juries. Its one great defect is that it is modern.

The public, continues Mr. Fourdinois, having no taste but for old styles and forcing the makers to live by imitations, the future of the art looks gloomy. For although forty years ago there was some advantage to be reaped from this necessity of imagination, this obligation of studying and analysing the types and methods of the fine epochs of taste, yet in the end such a trade spoils a man's hand, and furthermore it tends to spoil the public

peian, two of Japanese or Indo-Japanese. All the rest were described as Renaissance, Louis XIV., XV. or XVI. And yet, as Mr. Fourdinois admits, international juries willingly reward efforts in originality and modernity. However, the dangers of imitation mentioned by Mr. Fourdinois are very real. One of these days there will set in a furious reaction against old stuff; there will be a demand for modern objects in keeping with our modern conditions of life; and what will be the result if the artists have lost their skill of hand by constant copying, and have never developed their conceptive powers because they have always relied on the imagination of others?

HEADS AND FRUITS IN DECORATION.

In the selection of subjects for carving there has been but a limited field. The Greeks are believed to have confined their talents entirely to heads and figures, generally human. Their subjects were clothed with an historical and poetical interest; they represented warriors with the attributes of gods, and deities evincing all the perfection of humanity. Their female figures are the most faithful representatives of the most perfect state of feminine loveliness. Take their best school of art, and there will be found in its examples a union of ideal and natural beauty (the result of a lofty imagination governed by a mature judgment) which presents



France. Mr. Fourdinois is at the head of the first house in Paris for artistic furniture and the esteem in which he is held by his colleagues is shown by the fact that he was called upon to preside over the jury of the furniture class at the Exhibition of the Union Centrale last year; his remarks therefore have all the authority that could be desired.

Mr. Fourdinois asks: what is the state of the cabinet-makers art in modern France; whether the public has for it the same esteem as it had in a supreme degree in the XVII. and XVIII. centuries; whether the amateurs of the present day know how to encourage those who practice the art. Mr. Fourdinois confesses sadly that the cabinet-makers who strive to maintain the solid traditions of the great makers, reap for their pains in the exercise of their profession nothing but disappointment, injustice and misery. Speaking for the corporation at large he declares that the cabinet-makers art, that art which was so long one of the glories of France, is by no means ready to get out of the bad way in which it is. Everything is against it: the public which is unable to comprehend its efforts; our manners which at present are favorable rather to a certain average, democratic want of luxury, and not to a powerful movement of artistic taste. The current of modern society is against the furniture-makers art. The greatest obstacle against which contemporary artists and manufac-

taste in vulgarising it by coarse copies of works that are admirable only if their fineness and exquisite purity are preserved. The only hope of the French cabinet-makers is in a few, a very few amateurs who have the courage to resist prejudices and to furnish their houses with the independence of their own taste, and with the certitude that we ought to stamp frankly with the mark of our epoch, our character and our habits, the objects that we have made for our own use.

Mr. Fourdinois's remarks are unfortunately only too true. There is very little encouragement for a Parisian artist to torment his soul in the conception and execution of a purely original piece of furniture. On the other hand, during the past twenty-five years, it must be confessed, that with the exception of the brilliant creations of Mr. Fourdinois himself, the great Parisian furniture-makers have not made any very continuous or zealous efforts to get out of the rut of imitation. At the last exhibition of the Union Centrale we had the opportunity of seeing, in the rooms devoted to contemporary furniture, the furniture which during the past twenty-five years has earned for the Parisian makers medals, or other recompenses, at the hands of the juries of international exhibitions. Apart from hangings and embroidery sixty-four objects were exhibited, out of which five only were of confessedly modern style, one of Pom-

to the eye a combination of shapes, a series of scenes and a multitude of characters, as noble, as true and as various as Nature in her sublimest efforts can produce or man in his most intellectual mood conceive. The heads, shown on page 145, are faithful studies of this refinement in conception and delicacy in portrayal characteristic of the Greek people. The helmet of Minerva or the liberty cap of Paris are as graceful as is the poise of the head and half averted position of the face. The dignified goddess of Athens loses not a whit of her dignity, nor does the volatile nature of the gallant Paris lose itself in the carved features of the ideal beauty.

The animal heads were comparatively obscured in the art of Greece and Egypt, and it is to Assyria we must look for the earliest authentic use of this form of ornament. The furniture of that period was made up largely from the various features of animal life. An immense lion in bronze stood upon either side of the throne of Nebuchadnezzar, and served as its support, while the head of a tiger was the terminal of the arms. Man is influenced to a great extent in his prejudices by an appeal to his chivalry, and courage creates admiration where weakness, though natural, produces indifference. So was it in the selection of animals; the Assyrian employed only those of a savage nature, the more domestic or timid animals were ignored, and it is doubtful whether any such, excepting the horse and bull or ox, can be found upon any sculpture or relief of Egypt or Assyria. No one will question the wisdom of the selection, and it is being very properly and judiciously followed at this very time. It would be difficult indeed to devise any more suitable and artistic ornament for the arm of a great chair than the profile of the lion shown on page 147, or the full face head carved above

a hall stand or a buffet would serve as an ornamentation that would rival the more delicate, but equally striking classic heads, to which we have already directed attention, in the same position.

Leaving the age of human and animal representation exclusively, we approach the Middle Ages, where there was a style that was truly eclectic, for there were mingled in the most reckless manner graceful foliated designs with grotesque and questionable devices, human figures of every grade, costume and occupation, animals and monsters of all kinds, displaying the most vivid and teeming imagination, but the freedom and boldness of the execution have rarely, if ever, been surpassed.

The form of classic heads was in a great measure abandoned, and the arrangement of the hair in "lumps" (as Mr. Moody terms it), was not popular, nor did the curiously twisted, corded, rope-like locks of the Assyrian find favor in the eyes of the more modern artist. Heads with fabulous associations were devised, human skulls with the beak of a bird or with the body of a fish or serpent, animals with impossible muscles impossibly developed, in truth there was but one limit to the ornamental forms of the age, and that laid in the fertility of the artist to invent fabulous and eccentric designs.

It is difficult to write upon this phase of Decoration without referring to Grinling Gibbons, whose admirable and altogether unique work has been lasting and brilliant in its effect.

The cuts upon page 153 contain some hints for carvers that are worthy of being followed. The sprigs or branches sustaining the pears and apples are roughened, knotty, worm-eaten, such as are natural, not conventional, twigs and bark and wood. The average finish to the carved leaf of to-day displays exaggerated veins and fibres upon the upper side, and a slight, very slight, bevel about its edges; a bevel by no means sufficient to deceive the most casual observer into the thought that the leaf is of a different piece to the background, and a bevel that adds to, rather than lessens, the appearance of weight and clumsiness. The most delicate flower in nature is by such treatment made bulky and heavy, and its stem, ending abruptly, shows a harsh termination that is far from esthetic, or even artistic, and certainly not pleasing. Grinling Gibbons would experience peculiar feelings to see the good results that have followed his excellent efforts. His reputation rests in some measure upon the fact that he freed himself from the hide-bound traditions of his craft, and applied new ideas to old principles. A leaf with him was what nature made it, not what some mentally impecunious "old master" in wood-carving decreed it ought to be, and the result was that he portrayed nature and nature's peculiarities and attributes. A delicate flower was delicate in the carving, and was suspended from a fragile stem; a twig was not a reproduction of a gas-pipe, but was such a one as you can find on any tree within reach, it was not the nondescript that is now made, with its regulation wrinkles and creases, very much of the character of the burl and graining found in the majority of furniture plates and catalogues.

Gibbons ignored the conventional and carved with a bold touch; chiseled all about his figures, so that the most prying eye could barely discover the connection between the background and the ornament; his fruit was laid on, not cut out, and it would be an immeasurable advantage to the "large majority" of wood-carvers of this particular era if they would visit St. Paul's, or Petworth, or even Windsor Castle, and endeavor to inhale some of Grinling Gibbons's originality.

Walpole says of Gibbons: "There is no instance of a man before Gibbons who gave the wood the loose and airy lightness of flowers, and chained together the various productions of the elements, with a free disorder natural to each species. So delicate was his workmanship that he carved a pot of flowers that shook in the room with the motion of the coaches passing in the street. There is some foliage by him in Windsor and in the Choir of St. Pauls, besides chimney-pieces and picture frames, where dead game, flowers, and foliage almost deceive the eye into a belief of their reality. His heads of cherubs and productions of a similar nature, possess a sweetness of expression, and an angelic loveliness, which, as long as they exist, will render them the admiration of all lovers of ideal beauty."

CONCERNING COLOR THEORIES AND THE GENERAL HARMONY OF COLOR. BY GEO. CURTIS WRIGHT.

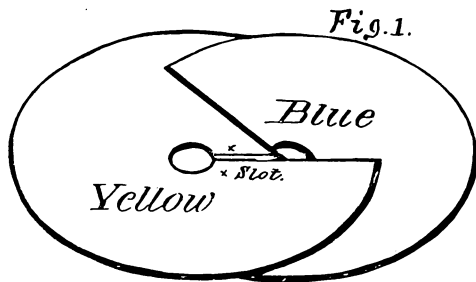
THE main points in recent color theories having been noted, our attention may be directed to the principal features deduced from the theory of Thomas Young, as modified and set forth by Helmholtz and Maxwell.

It is a well-known fact that very close representatives of all colors can be produced by the use of very few pigments. For example, crimson lake, gamboge and Prussian blue (red, yellow and blue). The red and yellow mixed in various proportions will furnish different shades of orange and orange-yellow; the blue and yellow, various shades of green; the red and blue, all the purple and violet hues.

Some of the most noted painters in water-colors have used only these three colors in painting, adding black for the purpose of darkening them to produce browns and grays.

A more profuse palette would enable the painter to produce very brilliant representatives of the hues of nature, yet very satisfactory sub-

stitutes can be produced with the colors mentioned above. These facts were known at a very early period in the history of painting, and furnished the foundation for the so-called theory of three primary colors—red, yellow and blue. Sir David Brewster, noted for his many wonderful optical discoveries, maintained that there were three original or fundamental kinds of light—red, yellow and blue—and that by their mixture in various proportions, would produce all other kinds of colored light, after the manner of mixing pigments.



On examining the matter theoretically, we find that it cannot be so, for outside and apart from ourselves there is no such thing as color, but a mere sensation that varies with the length of the wave producing it. Light consists only of waves, long and short—simply mere mechanical movements. Brewster's theory would imply that there were in the spectrum only three sets of waves, having three different lengths, which is not true.

According to the theory now under consideration, green light is produced by mixing blue and yellow light. Maxwell's disks furnish us with a simple means of mixing light of different colors, and is quite within the reach of all who are interested in this subject. A circular disk, painted with chrome yellow and provided with a radial slit, is to be combined with one prepared in the same way and painted with ultramarine blue.

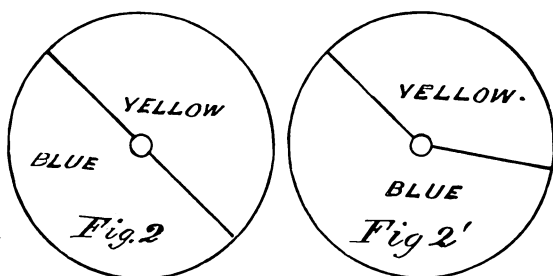


Fig. 1 shows the separate disks, and in Figs. 2 they are seen in combination. Fig. 3 represents a rotating machine, upon which the disks can be set in quite rapid motion, the two kinds of colored light being mingled the resultant tint will not be green, but a yellowish gray or reddish gray, according to the proportions of the two colors.

The experimenter can mingle the two colors in any proportion desired; but, vary the proportions as he may, it will be impossible to obtain a green hue, or anything approaching it. Another simple experiment, within the reach of all, is to use a piece of fine window or plate glass, which is to be supported in a vertical position, ten inches above a black surface. On either side of the glass the colored papers are placed. The blue paper will be seen directly through the glass, while the light from the yellow paper is first reflected from the glass and then reaches the eye.

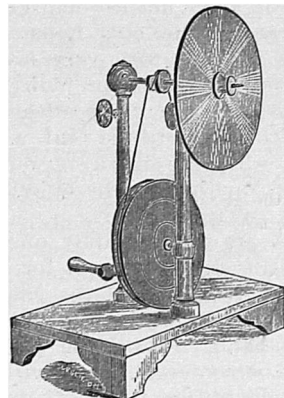


FIG. 3.

In using a more refined apparatus, the union of pure blue with the pure yellow light of the spectrum produces in the eye a sensation of white light, but not of green.

It is evident, therefore, that a total failure to produce green light by the mixture of blue and yellow light is fatal to the hypothesis of Brewster.

In observing an artist at work, we wonder at the skill and knowledge he displays in matching any color which is within the compass of his palette. We soon find, by closer observation, that

the matter is more complicated than it appeared at first sight, each pigment having a particular set of properties which it carries into its mixtures, and these properties being by no means fully indicated by its mere color. Some blue pigments furnish fine sets of greens, while others as beautiful and intense, yield only dull olive greens; some reds give glowing purples, while from others, not less bright, only dull, slaty purples result. The mixture of pigments in some cases gives results similar to those produced by mixing colored lights, but generally they differ, sometimes enormously.

In conducting these experiments satisfactorily, recourse must be had to the pure colored rays of the spectrum. The difficulties encountered in the use of this method are much greater, but the results so obtained are more valuable.

By mixing two kinds of pure-colored light we obtain usually a light having a color different from either of the original ingredients—red and yellowish-green give an orange hue, which looks in all respects like the pure orange of the spectrum; also in this new orange it is impossible for the eye to detect the presence of either red or yellowish-green light. This is true of all mixtures; in no case can the original colors be detected.

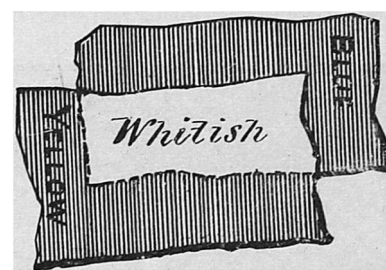


Fig. 4.

same color when mixed with bluish-green, or even with green; in the last case the tint is somewhat whitish. Furthermore, mixtures of certain colors of the spectrum give rise to white; this is true, for example, of red and bluish-green, and of yellow and ultramarine blue. The white, though so different in origin, has exactly the same appearance to the eye.

Such is the general character of the results obtained by mixing together masses of pure colored light.

Maxwell's disks (Figs. 1 and 2) enable us by an easy method to pursue our color investigations without having direct recourse to the spectrum (these experiments must be conducted in daylight), and will show the wide difference between the effects produced by mixture of light and mixture of pigments.

Fig. 5 represents two disks separately painted, one with vermilion, the other with ultramarine-blue. A smaller disk (single) is painted with a mixture on the palette of equal parts of vermilion, and the other with ultramarine-blue. Place the disks on the rotating apparatus as arranged in Fig. 5, the vermilion and ultramarine covering each one half of the

larger disk, the smaller one, exhibiting the result furnished by the palette, being placed in the center. When the compound disk is rotated, the colors of the outer portion undergo true mixture; it is easy to compare the resultant tint with that furnished by the palette. In this experiment the result was as follows: The larger disk became tinted red-purple, the smaller disk appearing gray and dull. The true color of the smaller disk was a dull violet-purple. It was noticed that not only was the color much darker and less saturated, but it had been changed, apparently, from a red-purple to a violet-purple. In order to ascertain how much the pigments had been darkened by mixture on the palette and otherwise changed, a black disk was combined with the vermilion and ultramarine-blue disks, and various amounts of black introduced into the red-purple mixture by rapid rotation. It was found impossible in this way to bring the color of the larger disk to equality with that of the smaller one, it remaining always too saturated in hue. A white disk was then added to the large one, and equalization finally effected. It was found, by placing a graduated circle (divided into 100 parts) around the disks, that twenty-one parts of vermilion, twenty parts of ultramarine, with fifty-one parts black and nine parts white, made a tint by rotation which was identical with that given by mixing the vermilion and ultramarine on palette.

